U.S. Department of Education
2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) [] Charter [**X**] Title I [**X**] Magnet [**X**] Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Barbara L. Heater

Official School Name: South Texas High School for Health Professions

School Mailing Address:
700 Med High Dr.
Mercedes, TX 78570-9703

County: Hidalgo State School Code Number*: 031916004

Telephone: (956) 565-2237 Fax: (956) 565-4039

Web site/URL: http://medhigh.stisd.net E-mail: barbara.heater@stisd.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Marla Guerra

District Name: South Texas ISD Tel: (956) 565-2454

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Homero Garcia

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2004.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: (per district designation)

	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1	Middle/Junior high schools
4	High schools
	K-12 schools
5	**TOTAL**

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 11653

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

[ ] Urban or large central city
[ ] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
[ ] Suburban
[X] Small city or town in a rural area
[ ] Rural

4. 5 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	**6**			0
K			0	**7**			0
1			0	**8**			0
2			0	**9**	90	176	266
3			0	**10**	64	106	170
4			0	**11**	61	114	175
5			0	**12**	60	105	165
		TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL					776

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
11 %	Asian
2 %	Black or African American
82 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
4 %	White
1 %	Two or more races
100 %	**Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 13 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	35
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	57
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	92
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	703
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.131
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	13.087

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 2

Number of languages represented: 1

Specify languages:

Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 59 %

Total number students who qualify: 460

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

460/703 studentsÂ are eligible for free and reduced lunch = 65%

10. Students receiving special education services: 1 %

Total Number of Students Served: 6

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

1	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	2	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	5	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	1	Speech or Language Impairment
1	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	3	0
Classroom teachers	51	2
Special resource teachers/specialists	3	0
Paraprofessionals	2	0
Support staff	10	0
Total number	69	2

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 **14 :1**

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	92%	94%	94%	94%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	13%	10%	8%	12%	16%
Student dropout rate	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

- Daily teacher attendance reflects all absences including personal business leave, sick leave, jury duty, and school leave.
- 2008-2009 is actual attendance but reflects the absences of one teacher who was out on Family Medical Leave Act, etc. for almost the entire year.
- 2004-2008 are estimated attendance rates.
- Teacher turnover rates are due to retirements or in a few cases due to moving from area.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	165	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	92	%
Enrolled in a community college	7	%
Enrolled in vocational training	0	%
Found employment	1	%
Military service	0	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0	%
Unknown	0	%
Total	**100**	%

PART III - SUMMARY

In 1984, South Texas High School for Health Professions (Med High), a part of the South Texas Independent School District, was established at the direction of the state legislature, with the mission of "home-growing" medical professionals to serve a severely medically underserved population. As such, the mission of the school has been and continues to be to provide students with rigorous academic instruction and advanced technical skills that will allow for successful transition into allied health careers and/or post-secondary education.

Although Med High is a magnet school in the sense that it focuses on a specific career, the health professions, it is non-traditional (and very unique) in the sense that ***all*** students are accepted as long as there are seats available and the student is a resident of one of the three southernmost counties of the state, which represents approximately thirty area school districts and covers around 3,000 square miles.

Academic excellence is more than just a catchy slogan at Med High; it is nationally validated. In addition to a number of local and state awards, we have been the recipients of several national awards, including the Secretary's Award for Outstanding Vocational-Technical Program, the National Title I Distinguished School Award, the National Association of Secondary School Principals' Breakthrough High School Award, and have appeared annually in both Newsweek and U. S. News and World Report's listings of the Top 100 high schools in the nation.

The entire school community makes this coveted success possible primarily because of an unwavering pervasive commitment to students above all else. High expectations for each and every student are the status quo, but again this is not just an exercise in semantics. A well-established, yet flexible and individual student support system is firmly entrenched at the campus level and complemented at the district level, whether it be by the resources of the Biblioteca Las Américas (school library), the Instructional Technology Department, or central office staff. Professional staff development is designed to supplement the needs of students, to reflect research-based best practices, and to provide for self-growth.

The curriculum at Med High is rigorous with expectations above and beyond state requirements, both in course requirements and graduation credits. Additional math and science classes were the default setting at this school long before it became a requirement of the state. A sequence of health science technology classes beginning in the freshman year and culminating in hands-on clinical experiences at the senior level are required of all students. The state of Texas has three graduation plans. Students are expected to graduate in the Recommended Program and a majority complete the Distinguished Achievement Program, Texas's most rigorous graduation plan.

Students are expected to not only know the academic content of their courses, but also to be able to apply the knowledge in real life situations. Nowhere is this more evident than in the formal Health Science Technology curriculum. After successful completion of the requisite courses, senior students can select participation in a general Clinical Rotation, or state certification programs in Nursing Assisting, Pharmacy Technician, Dental Assisting, and an Emergency Medical Technician program. These programs are not offered as the terminal product of a Med High education, but rather as a means of financing post-secondary training and/or education. Members of the professional medical community participate in the program as classroom speakers, by allowing our students to make presentations to their institutions, and by providing the sites for the students' clinical experiences.

Opportunities for students are provided not only for academics but leadership as well. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities which are designed to build leadership skills, instill self-

confidence, and to assist them in becoming productive citizens. Med High students graciously give of themselves in the form of community service totaling thousands of hours annually.

As a foundation program, Med High serves its students well. About 98% of her graduates choose and attend college, with the remaining opting for service to America through the military. Many of her graduates receive scholarships for academics or community service.

Med High celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday recently, a fledgling institution compared to many. Yet already, there are physicians, dentists, nurses, medical researchers, psychologists, medical laboratory scientists, x-ray technicians, occupational therapists, licensed vocational nurses, dental hygienists, and other professionals who take much pride and ownership in their alma mater.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

The TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) is the state assessment administered to students in grades 3-11 designed to measure competence on objectives derived from the state curriculum. This curriculum, known as the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), standardizes minimal curricular offerings across the state. Third through eleventh grade students are assessed in various subject areas depending on the grade level. Students must pass the exit level TAKS in the areas of English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies to obtain a high school diploma.

Campuses and districts are rated based on student performance (all students as a group, and African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups), completion rate, and annual dropout rate. The following are the 2008-2009 requirements for each rating:

- Exemplary:
  - Meets 90% standard for each subject or meets standard with (TPM) Texas Projection Measure
  - Meets 95% completion rate
  - Meets 2% annual dropout rate or required improvement
- Recognized:
  - Meets 75% standard for each subject or meets 70% floor and required improvement or meets standard with TPM
  - Meets 85% completion rate or meets floor of 75% and required improvement
  - Meets 2% annual dropout rate or meets required improvement
- Academically Acceptable:
  - Meets 70% in Reading/ELA, Writing, Social Studies, 55% in math and 50% in science or meets required improvement or meets standard with TPM
  - Meets 75% completion rate or meets required improvement
  - Meets 2% annual dropout rate or meets required improvement
- Academically Unacceptable:
  - Standards have not been met

Students who pass the state assessments are described as having exhibited satisfactory performance at or above the state passing standards (2100 scale score), and have a sufficient understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the content/subject being tested. Students who demonstrate Commended Performance are described as having high academic achievement (at least 2400 scale score), are considerably above the state passing standard (2100 scale score), and have a thorough understanding of the TEKS curriculum in the given content area. The student performance levels that demonstrate meeting standards and Commended Performance levels have remained the same for a number of years.

Med High was rated as an Exemplary Campus in 2009 and a Recognized Campus from 2005-2008. Prior to 2009, the standards for being named an Exemplary Campus were different, requiring a 90% passing rate in each of the subject areas. The campus has not only focused on sustaining a high passing rate, but has also concentrated on increased Commended Performance. Over the last five years, about 30% (based on all students) have scored at commended levels in reading and math. Overall state exam scores have remained fairly constant at Med High, with slight improvements in the campus targeted areas of math and science. Assessment results indicate that students' success has been sustained and there are minimal disparities among grade levels or subgroups noted. It should be noted that we do not ordinarily exclude special population students from grade level testing.

Texas assessment information, including descriptions, standards, ratings, and reports, that include information on all subgroups may be found on the Texas Education Agency website (www.tea.state.tx.us), specifically at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=3426&menu_id=660&menu_id2=795 .

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

The Med High faculty and staff annually revisit the campus improvement plan, with the most crucial area of review being the latest assessment data. This data, though summative in nature, is formatively used for determining strategies designed to improve/sustain both student and school performance. It is disaggregated and interpreted, corresponding goals are set, and strategies to achieve those goals are formulated. As a result, decisions such as the content of professional staff development, the allocation of monetary and staff resources, and curricular changes are driven by the data interpretation. This document then becomes the blueprint for attaining and/or sustaining program effectiveness.

Assessment data is used both at the campus and the departmental level. Departments typically use the data to make informed recommendations for curriculum offerings, sequencing, instructional methods, and even staffing patterns. The data also drives diagnostic testing and subsequent adjustments to instruction.

A specific example of using data to make program decisions is being proposed by our math department. Currently, the school operates on an A/B alternating block schedule where students attend a class every other day. Realizing the importance of Algebra I as a cornerstone class in a student's secondary education, and based on TAKS, state end of course exams, and department-developed assessment data, there is a recommendation to offer at least one section of Algebra I where students would be scheduled into Algebra I everyday, thus doubling their classroom seat time. Making this adjustment would provide more time and a slower pace to cover the Algebra TEKS. Selection of students will be accomplished through the use of a multidimensional rubric.

An additional example of the use of assessment data has been our ongoing campus initiative to personalize the education of our students. At present, a committee composed of administration, counselors, and department team leaders are reviewing web-based remediation, both commercial and campus-developed, in an effort to individualize instruction for students "at promise" and/or in need of enrichment activities.

3. **Communicating Assessment Results:**

Communicating student performance, whether it be at the student level, the parent level, or the public level, takes many forms at Med High, but above all, it is very transparent – we publicize our successes and share our challenges as well.

We mail out either a three-week progress report or a nine-week report card for every student. In addition, these grades are reviewed with students individually by their first period teacher, at which time strategies for either maintaining or improving performance are identified and agreed upon. Counselors and administrators consider this process part of their daily job descriptions. We also utilize technology, which allows students and parents to view their grades online in real time. Individual teacher and overall campus data are a frequent topic at staff development.

Counselors conduct classroom sessions to distribute and interpret standardized test data, such as the state accountability tests, the PLAN and PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment tests), which are administered free of charge to all of our students, or other related assessments.

Required state and federal reports, such as the state school report card and the No Child Left Behind Report Card are mailed to all parents. In addition, the results are posted on our school website. School staff members

are always available to interpret data for students, parents, and the community at large, including the news media, as appropriate.

At their monthly meetings, our board of directors recognizes students, staff, and campuses for their achievements by the awarding of Star Awards, a framed certificate of recognition. This recognition ranges from academic to extracurricular to personal achievements. A regular agenda item reports on success performance, found in the Policy and Curriculum portion of the meeting.

Our district and campus maintain up to date websites (http://www.stisd.net and http://medhigh.stisd.net) respectively. In addition, the district, under the auspices of the Public Relations and Marketing Specialist, publish and distribute monthly (BoardWorks), quarterly (SchoolWorks), and yearly reports (Annual Report) which highlight student, staff, and campus successes. This staff member also regularly provides reports and information to the local media.

Most importantly, we use the data indicative of our successes and challenges to drive our instruction. In turn, we communicate the changes necessary to sustain and enhance our success through the vehicles mentioned previously. Finally, we celebrate successes!

4. **Sharing Success:**

We find that our students, past and current, are our best ambassadors. Nowhere is this more evident than when we enroll the siblings and relatives (and recently, the sons and daughters) of our graduates as new students. This even goes internationally, as we have hosted several foreign exchange students. It does not stop there either, as these graduates even recruit quality faculty and staff members as prospective employees. Our faculty and staff also serve as Med High emissaries when they attend, participate, or present at professional meetings and conferences.

At both the district and campus level, we maintain up to date websites, which in addition to the items traditionally found in such places, contain full public access to items such as our Essential Learning Outcomes and Scopes and Sequences for each of our courses.

We hold two Open Houses per school year, and although these are designed primarily for our current students, the public is invited as well. As part of our annual recruitment efforts, we host multiple Advisement sessions designed to acquaint prospective parents and students with our program. We work closely with our partners in higher education, striving to align and provide seamless transitions for our students.

We have a strategically placed bulletin board in our hallway, across from the plaques and banners that herald our achievements, where we post newspaper and magazine articles featuring our past and present students and staff.

Our district Public Relations and Marketing Specialist provides us with custom tailored public relations materials for distribution at career fairs, school visits, health fairs, or mass mailings. In addition, this staff member provides news features to the local media. At the campus level, we respond regularly to media requests for interviews on different contemporary educational issues.

The local, state, and national recognitions garnered by our schools have prompted inquiries about our program from across the state and nation. We receive e-mails, phone calls, and even host multi-day visits from schools as far away as California and New York, and as close as some of our local Texas districts, all wishing to emulate at least parts of our program.

As in all endeavors, we strive for transparency, and leave no ingredients out of our recipe for student success.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:**

The curriculum at Med High is driven not only by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) but especially by the standards of the College Board's Advanced Placement Program. As such, there has never been the need to teach exclusively to the state accountability test, yet our students consistently perform at high levels on this and other standardized tests.

We offer an excellent academic foundation, validated anecdotally by our graduates and institutes of higher learning attended by those graduates, and objectively with related data. Our opening statement spoken at our new parent/student orientations, sums this up: "We are never going to ask you if you want to go to college, instead, we are going to ask you where you want to go to college, and then we are going to do everything we can to make sure that you have your choice."

Med High's language arts program has its roots in both literature and writing. Students begin their studies the summer before their actual enrollment (and every summer thereafter until graduation) with a required increasingly complex summer reading program. Upon completion of the four year course sequence, students will have read, studied, and analyzed various literary genre including novels, short stories, poems, essays, speeches, and film offerings. Students also are required to refine their writing skills with emphasis on mechanics, grammar, and spelling. Course offerings include Pre-Advanced Placement (only level offered for first and second year students), college preparatory, Dual Enrollment, and Advanced Placement English, as well as courses in creative, practical, and technical writing. An additional offering is a required class in speech (communication applications), and an elective class in humanities.

The science curriculum is based on the laboratory model, enhanced by technology, whereby students learn, practice, and apply the scientific method to the world around them. Because of our accelerated freshman year, students graduate with at least five science credits, and usually six or more. Science courses at our school include Integrated Physics and Chemistry, Biology (I & II), Chemistry (I & II), Physics (I & II), Environmental Science, and Scientific Research and Design. Levels include college preparatory, Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment.

The core area of social studies focuses on the geographical features of the world, as well as the study of comparative cultures, economic systems, governments, and religions. World Geography, World History, United States History, Government, and Economics make up the courses offered in this department. They are taught at the college preparatory, Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment level.

Mathematics at Med High includes the all important cornerstone of Algebra I. Other offerings include Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus, offered the range of college preparatory to Advanced Placement/Dual Enrollment. Students graduate with at least four math classes, and strive to meet our district goal of satisfactorily completing at least Pre-Calculus. An SAT/ACT (Scholastic Assessment Test) preparatory course is offered in conjunction with the English department to assist students in their preparation for college. Faculty members make every effort to help students realize the application of math concepts in daily life.

Our remaining course offerings are found in the departments of Foreign Language (Spanish), Special Needs, FAPETAS (Fine Arts, Physical Education, Technology Applications), and Health Science Technology. While these offerings are not considered "core" classes by traditional definition, they are integral to the mission of our school and as components of a well-rounded education.

Faculty members are expected to deliver instruction in a way that meets the needs of all students through differentiation, whether by utilization of such methods as the various learning modalities, multiple intelligences, and/or the use of instructional technology. Both formative and summative assessment, and the use of this generated data to drive instruction, is required. Horizontal, vertical, and cross-curricular alignment between and amongst grade levels and departments is an expectation. Teaching and learning at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy is a given rather than a goal.

There is a concerted effort by our faculty to ensure that our curriculum is not taught in isolation, but rather that the core subjects (and in our particular case, health science) are an integral part of each curricular offering.

2b. **(Secondary Schools) English:**
(This question is for secondary schools only)

It is a given at Med High that all teachers are teachers of reading and writing. As such, both subject areas are integral components of each and every class offering, including Physical Education. It just might look different, dependent on subject matter. For example, students might be required to journal, take Cornell (a note-taking system) notes, read aloud and discuss a subject related passage or short story, complete summer cross-disciplinary readings, or write an essay.

This critical subject area embraces high expectations for all, as evidenced by the fact that all freshman and sophomore students are enrolled in Pre-Advanced Placement classes by default. Junior and senior students have the option of taking their English classes at the college preparatory level, or for Advanced Placement/Dual Enrollment credit. Even with these choices, the bar is set high with a newly enacted board policy that requires students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses to at least attempt the corresponding exam in order to receive the weighted average. The department is not limited to the traditional offerings, as there are courses offered in creative, practical, and technical writing, as well as a course in the humanities. A course in SAT/ACT (college entrance exams) is also required of all students.

Although we do not have a large population of students reading below grade level, we do have some students who qualify for placement in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. These smaller classes work on improving their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in the new language, with the objective of transition into regular English classes at the earliest opportunity.

Our national-award winning library, the Biblioteca Las Americas, serves as an invaluable resource to students, parents, and faculty. In collaboration with our Parental Involvement program, a parent reading program has been initiated. Participants choose a book (offered in either English or Spanish), read it, and then meet periodically in a specially furnished room for group discussions. Coincidentally, some of the offerings have mirrored those on the summer reading list. It is hoped that this program will model the necessary ingredients for a lifetime of reading.

3. **Additional Curriculum Area:**

Since a major component of the mission of our school is that students can transition into allied health careers and or related post-secondary education, the Health Science Technology curriculum is central in fulfilling this mission.

All students take a Health Science Technology course at each grade level. The curriculum begins with medical terminology and culminates with students applying the numerous skills they have learned throughout the four years in a clinical setting their senior year. As sophomores and juniors, students have the opportunity for exploration of various health care disciplines. Some of these are medical laboratory, veterinary medicine, respiratory therapy, dentistry, nursing care and radiology. Junior/Senior students enroll in their choice of a

certified nursing assistant program, a pharmacy technician program, an emergency medical technician program, a dental assisting program, or clinical rotations, which expose them to six different medical sites related to their particular interests.

Our school offers a half day vocational program for special needs students interested in nursing, particularly those from neighboring smaller school districts. They are counted towards the state accountability ratings of their home districts. These students enroll in two academic classes and a health science technology class. Upon meeting the state requirements they are eligible to sit for the certified nursing assistant exam.

The Health Science Technology department is staffed by teachers who are all licensed, and /or certified in a health profession. Our faculty includes Registered Nurses, a Respiratory Therapist, a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine, Medical Laboratory Scientists, an Emergency Medical Technician, Nuclear Medicine Scientist and a Registered Dental Hygienist. Due to their years of clinical experience, they are able to impart real life situations in the classroom. This is beneficial when incorporating case study or problem based learning in the classroom, in which our students are required to collaborate in solving health care scenarios.

A Health Science Technology education benefits students by teaching knowledge and skills vital not only for their personal health, but for the good of the community. Many graduates are employed in health care positions, aided by the certifications they have earned at Med High, as they continue their education.

As the need for health care services continue to escalate, our students are positioned not only to provide for themselves, but for their community. As such, the Health Science Technology department embodies the heart and soul of the mission of our school for all of our students.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

At South Texas High School for Health Professions, we believe that through diverse teaching styles and systems of time and support, every student can learn. In becoming a professional learning community, we have established a collaborative school culture that believes failure is not a viable choice.

Effective teaching is the first step to meeting the diverse needs of students. Since we have purposely kept our enrollment small, our teachers are afforded the opportunity to know our students well. Because our instruction is data driven, and supplemented by the use of individual, group, and common formative and summative assessments, teachers are able to adjust instruction to meet student needs, even to individual student level.

We have implemented a Pyramid of Interventions to provide a campus-wide system of support for students. It is a tiered system, beginning with minimal support, and culminating in referral for special needs diagnosis. Examples of interventions could include training in the use of student planners, peer assistance, extended time, mandatory tutorials, parent conferences, student contracts, nonlinguistic representations for speakers of other languages, or assignment to an adult mentor. In addition, before students even enroll at our campus, we hold mandatory transition activities in the form of Advisement and New Scholar Academies for parents and students. Blended/hybrid online instruction is also in the developmental stages.

Because some students require more time and support to learn, additional time is embedded in the school day in the form of a tutorial period, whereby students can receive small group instruction or procure individual learning opportunities. After-school tutorials are also held, and transportation is provided. Many teachers willingly give up their lunch period to assist students.

Contracts are offered to those who have not achieved mastery in a particular course. This is a personalized plan written by the classroom teacher that targets specific areas of deficiency. Students are given the opportunity to complete alternative assignments to demonstrate mastery and regain credit.

A weekly collaboration period for all teachers is built into the master schedule, and wherever possible, departments share at least one common conference period, which is twice the normal length. These practices give teachers ample opportunities to share successful strategies and to plan meaningful instruction horizontally, vertically, and across the disciplines. In essence, this has allowed our teachers to work smarter, not harder in the interest of what's best for students.

5. **Professional Development:**

Med High has embarked on a multi-year journey designed to take us from "Good to Great" in our quest to positively impact student achievement. A major component of this process is ongoing meaningful staff development.

South Texas ISD has supported the integration of PLC (Professional Learning Community) concepts district-wide, and has committed the financial and human resources necessary to make this happen. Accordingly, to date, we have sent about half of our faculty and staff to these "whole picture" presentations, with the intention of eventually having all go through this experience.

Because of challenges related to student achievement brought to the forefront with our district's strategic planning process, we have systemically identified areas in need of improvement. As such, we have brought in experts in the field to work with our faculty for alternative grading, formative assessments, and the Pyramid of Interventions. Due at least in part to the ownership exhibited by our faculty and staff, the data is showing that we are slowly but surely making a difference for our students.

We do not measure student achievement solely for "at promise" students. We continue to hold high expectations for all, and nowhere is this indicated more than in the training afforded our core area teachers, specifically in the areas of English, Math, and Science. We are participating in a multifaceted partnership with AP (Advanced Placement) Strategies whose beliefs include the idea that the higher levels of thinking found in Bloom's Taxonomy should be implemented in all classroom activities and presentations. This in turn prepares our students for achievement in the College Board's Advanced Placement program.

As mentioned previously, we hold the belief that all subject areas make an invaluable contribution to well-rounded students. For this reason, all faculty and staff members are encouraged and supported fully in their attendance at one major local, state, or national staff development or professional meeting each year.

6. **School Leadership:**

Over a period of years, leadership at Med High has changed from the paradigm of head buffalo and herd to the model of a flock of geese, as described in Belasco and Stayer's Flight of the Buffalo: Soaring to Excellence, Learning to Let Employees Lead.

As in most school districts at one time, the head buffalo (principal) told the buffalo (staff) what to do, and they did it. And then they stood around waiting for the head buffalo to "lead" them again, and the cycle perpetuated itself.

In the flock of geese leadership structure practiced at our school, all staff members, (including students at times), are like a flock of geese: interdependent and responsible. Depending on the task at hand, changing roles are necessary, so at times one might be the leader, or the follower, or the scout. Simply put, when the task changes, so might the role.

As such, the principal has accepted the charge of assisting staff in developing their personal capabilities, and of establishing an environment where each member of the team feels comfortable and affirmed in assuming

the various roles. Because of this, the principal is able to empower staff ownership for instruction designed to increase student achievement to the highest levels and to encourage related initiatives characterized by creative thinking “outside the book”, but grounded in policy.

A specific example of this leadership style would be found in the addition of courses to our four year course sequence. Typically, a teacher is the initiator of the process. The rationale for adding the course is further developed at the department level, with input from the counseling staff who review it in light of compliance with credits, graduation plans, etc. The proposed action is then viewed by administration who ask the sometimes difficult questions generated by policies and available resources. If the course becomes viable, it is presented to the Site-Based Decision Making team for further action.

It might appear that the principal’s role has been abdicated in a sense, but there exists a highly functional safety net: all decisions are filtered through the school philosophy of “what’s best for students” within the framework of the school mission.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 10 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	89	89	84	76	87
Commended	29	29	24	19	24
Number of students tested	196	190	208	198	165
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	88	88	78	75	84
Commended	26	24	10	13	6
Number of students tested	123	99	106	103	75
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	87	86	81	74	86
Commended	26	22	12	13	16
Number of students tested	151	148	167	164	130
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	96	100	100	100	94
Commended	48	61	50	25	35
Number of students tested	23	18	18	8	17

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian

Subject: Reading Grade: 10 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	97	94	93	96	86
Commended	27	22	17	21	9
Number of students tested	196	190	208	198	165
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	96	93	91	95	84
Commended	15	11	5	20	1
Number of students tested	124	99	106	103	75
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	97	93	92	96	87
Commended	15	15	8	21	2
Number of students tested	151	148	167	165	130
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	82
Commended	33	33	17	25	18
Number of students tested	24	18	18	8	17

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 11 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	96	96	96	96	95
Commended	48	43	34	38	37
Number of students tested	162	172	164	135	119
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	95	96	95	93	93
Commended	42	29	21	33	40
Number of students tested	111	92	77	70	63
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	95	97	96	95	96
Commended	41	34	20	30	37
Number of students tested	128	137	132	109	93
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	100	100		100	100
Commended	80	67		29	50
Number of students tested	20	15		14	14

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian

Subject: Reading Grade: 11 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	99	99	93	98	98
Commended	47	31	43	29	45
Number of students tested	162	172	164	135	119
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	98	99	99	96	97
Commended	59	16	38	20	50
Number of students tested	111	93	77	17	62
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	98	99	92	98	98
Commended	56	23	40	17	92
Number of students tested	130	139	132	109	43
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	100	100		100	100
Commended	75	40		50	71
Number of students tested	20	15		14	14

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 9 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	90	90	84	87	85
Commended	37	39	29	27	27
Number of students tested	176	178	206	208	225
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	83	85	83	86	80
Commended	34	40	29	23	6
Number of students tested	108	113	112	115	112
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	89	88	83	86	84
Commended	32	37	25	23	25
Number of students tested	165	168	169	172	177
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	70	71	71	47	
Number of students tested	10	24	14	17	

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian

Subject: Reading Grade: 9 Test: TAKS

Edition/Publication Year: TAKS Publisher: Pearson

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	98	98	97	98	93
Commended	25	56	33	34	26
Number of students tested	176	178	206	208	225
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
Met Standard	96	96	96	98	91
Commended	16	52	30	25	13
Number of students tested	108	115	113	118	112
2. African American Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	97	97	97	98	92
Commended	21	54	28	28	18
Number of students tested	165	170	170	176	177
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	40	83	57	53	
Number of students tested	10	24	14	17	

Notes:

- Data not reported for subgroups 2, 4, and 5 due to small numbers to protect confidentiality
- Largest other subgroup is Asian